# XXVII. *An Account of the Virtues of Soap in diſſolving the Stone, in the Caſe of the Rev. Mr.* Matthew Simſon. *Communicated by* John Pringle, *M. D. F. R. S.*

*To the Rev.* Tho. Birch, *D. D. F. R. S.*

SIR,

Read April 28, 1757. A Few days ago I received from Dr. Auſtin, phyſician at Edinburgh, the caſe of the Rev. Mr. Simſon, drawn up by himſelf, in the form of a letter to Dr. Auſtin; and which you may remember was alluded to by Dr. Whytt, in the paper read at the laſt meeting of the Society.

As I am at liberty to communicate this account to others, I thought it would not be unacceptable to the gentlemen of the Society, to have another well-atteſted inſtance laid before them of the virtues of ſoap in diſſolving the ſtone, or, at leaſt, in removing all thoſe painful ſymptoms, which uſually accompany that diſtemper.

To the patient's own narration I have ſubjoined an extract from Dr. Auſtin's letter to me, containing the ſequel of the caſe from the date of Mr. Simſon's letter to his death; with an account of the ſtate of his bladder, as it appeared to Dr. Auſtin upon diſſection. I am,

SIR,

Your moſt obedient humble Servant,

Pall-Mall, 27 April, 1757.

John Pringle.



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*A Letter from the Rev. Mr.* Simſon, *Miniſter at* Pencaitland, *to Dr.* Adam Auſtin, *Phyſician in* Edinburgh.

Dear Sir,

Read April 28. 1757. ACcording to your deſire, I ſend you the hiſtory of my caſe; which is as follows:

I was of an healthy conſtitution till the year 1730, when I was ſeized with a frequent inclination to make water, without any previous pain in the kidneys or ureters. This ſymptom continued till the year 1733, without giving me much uneaſineſs.

In June 1733, as I was riding from Edinburgh to my own houſe at Pencaitland, I was ſeized with a great difficulty and pain in making water, which went off when I got home.

In the month of July, having again got on horſeback, I was ſeized with the ſame complaint, but more violent; for then ſome drops of blood came away. From this time, if I rode eight or ten miles, I paſſed ſome blood, but without pain.

In September I made a journey of 60 miles on horſeback; but every two miles was obliged to diſmount, and made ſome bloody water.

I continued much in the ſame way all the year 1734, as the preceding; only had one additional complaint, of a pain in the glans after making water, and likewiſe in the neck of the bladder. The only thing I did for it was, to drink plentifully of warm milk and water; and gave over riding, on account of the bloody urine.

In

In the month of Auguſt I was ſounded by my nephew, Dr. Simſon, profeſſor of medicine in the univerſity of St. Andrew's; but he found no ſtone, which he attributed to a wrong poſture I was in, when he ſounded me.

During the winter, if I walked more than uſual, I was ſure to have a return of the bloody urine and ſtrangury.

In November 1735, I was ſounded by Mr. Balderſtone, ſurgeon, in Edinburgh, a gentleman very expert in that operation, and likewiſe by Dr. Drummond of Perthſhire. They both diſtinctly felt a ſtone: and I myſelf took hold of the catheter, when it was in my bladder, and felt the ſtone as diſtinctly, as if it had been in my hand.

About Chriſtmas I was ſeized with a pain along the left ureter, and violent vomitings; but, upon uſing a turpentine clyſter and opiates, it went off.

During the year 1736, I continued much the ſame as the preceding year, always drinking great plenty of milk and water; which gave me great relief, as to the bloody urine.

I was adviſed by my nephew, Dr. Simſon, to go to London, and be cut by Mr. Cheſelden; the reſt of my friends adviſing me to be cut by Mr. Smith, a lithotomiſt at Perth. However, I deferred the operation, and continued much the ſame all the year 1737, having ſevere fits now and then.

In the year 1738 Sir Alexander Gibſon, of Addiſton, informed me, that he had been in my condition, had paſſed ſeveral ſmall ſtones, and had found incredible ſervice from the uſe of ſoap pills: for, from not being able to get out of bed, in the ſpace of

of two months after uſing the ſoap he was able to go a hunting. However, for ſome time I was afraid to try the ſoap, not knowing what effects it might have on a confirmed ſtone; Sir Alexander Gibſon's caſe being only that of ſmall ſtones. But the Rev. Mr. Lundie, of Salton, by experiments convinced me of the efficacy of ſoap in diſſolving a confirmed ſtone out of the bladder; for the ſtone gradually grew ſmoother and ſmoother, and at laſt was quite diſſolved.

On the 12th of February 1739, I firſt began the uſe of the ſoap, and in the beginning took only a drachm in the 24 hours. The firſt week it made me a little qualmiſh: however, I gradually increaſed the doſe; ſo that in ſix weeks I took ſix drachms a day, without its diſagreeing in the leaſt with me. I made it up into pills, and waſhed them down with a draught of warm milk and water.

From the time I began to uſe the ſoap, my graveliſh ſymptoms gradually abated; but, upon walking two or three miles, I made bloody urine. However, that ſymptom gradually abated; and in the year 1743 all the ſymptoms of a ſtone quite vaniſhed, inſomuch that I could walk, ride, or go in a machine, as well as ever.

From February 1739, to July 1743, I took every day five or ſix drachms of ſoap: but after that time I diminiſhed the doſe to half an ounce; and never after had any return of a graveliſh ſymptom, tho' I ſtill imagine the ſtone is not intirely diſſolved; for, after ſitting ſome time, I find as it were ſomething come to the neck of the bladder; but which gives me no uneaſineſs.

This,

This, Sir, according to the beſt of my memory, is my caſe: and if it can be of any benefit to you, in the cure of this painful diſeaſe, it will give great pleaſure to,

Dear Sir,

Your moſt obedient Servant,

Nov. 20th, 1749. Matthew Simſon.

*The Extract from Dr.* Auſtin's *Letter to Dr.* Pringle.

Read April 28. 1757. THE Rev. Mr. Simſon's letter to me was written in the year 1749; about which time he told me, that he had ridden 40 miles in a day, without any bad ſymptom enſuing.

In the year 1752 he broke his thigh-bone at the neck, by a fall from his horſe, and continued for ſix weeks in great pain; but after that time he grew eaſier, and was able to put his foot to the ground. One day, as his ſervant was helping him to walk acroſs the room, he let him fall; upon which Mr. Simſon felt a ſevere pain: the broken leg became then evidently ſhorter than the other; and by that misfortune he was confined to his bed for near two years. However, about ſix months before he died, he was ſo well recovered, as to be able to go to church, and to perform divine ſervice.

About the beginning of May 1756, Mr. Simſon was ſeized with a diarrhæa, which reſiſted all medicine, and carried him off in the 83d year of his age. From the date of his letter to his death he had never diſcontinued the uſe of the ſoap (except during the time

of his laſt illneſs), tho' he had not been troubled with any painful ſymptom of a ſtone ſince the year 1743.

I obtained leave of his friends to open the body, but found no ſtone or gravel in the bladder; that part appearing to be, in every reſpect, in a natural ſtate, except at the neck, where the coats ſeemed to be ſchirrous, and were about a quarter of an inch thick.

It is probable, that the ſtone had been of a ſofter texture, and more eaſily diſſolved, than ordinary; otherwiſe five or ſix drachms of ſoap taken daily, even for ſo long a time, could not have diſſolved it intirely; for many have uſed that medicine in much larger doſes, and at the ſame time have drank lime-water plentifully, without obtaining ſuch effects; tho' all their painful ſymptoms were removed by that courſe, as Dr. Whytt has ſhewn in his treatiſe on this ſubject.

I ſhall only add, that Mr. Simſon's ſon, who is now miniſter at Fala, was preſent at the opening of the body, and can atteſt, that there was no ſtone found in the bladder.

Edinburgh,
15 April 1757.

Adam Auſtin.

*A Letter from Dr.* Adam Drummond *to Dr.* Adam Auſtin, *relating to the Rev. Mr.* Matthew Simſon's *Caſe. Communicated by* J. Pringle, *M.D. F.R.S.*

Read June 23, 1757.

I Have yours; and was preſent when Mr. Balderſtone ſounded Mr. Simſon; and both of us perceived, very diſtinctiy, a large ſtone: and Mr. Simſon himſelf felt it; which we were

were the more ſollicitous he ſhould do, as he was ſounded before by Dr. Simſon, who had declared there was no ſtone. But the particular magnitude of it we could not well determine at the end of a long catheter; tho' I remember Mr. Balderſtone, who was well verſed in that buſineſs, conjectured it to be pretty large. He was ſounded only once by us, as the urethra was a little hurt by turning the catheter. There is only one circumſtance in the caſe, which Mr. Simſon ſeems to have omitted; that, from the firſt ſymptoms of the ſtone, he paſſed a great deal of *mucus* mixed with *pus*, as well as blood; and great quantities of gritty red ſand, all in ſingle grains, never any concreted into ſmall ſtones. I take the more notice of this, as I do not remember, that, after he uſed the ſoap, he ever paſſed any ſand, but a good deal of *mucus*, in which the ſoap was diſcoverable by its frothing. Could the gritty particles of ſand be again ſuſpended in the urine, ſo as to become inviſible? or were they wrapt up in the ſoapy liquid, ſo as to eſcape obſervation? I have ſeen ſeveral ſtones of a ſoft conſiſtence diſſolved into mucilage by ſoap: but the ſand paſſed by Mr. Simſon, before he uſed the ſoap, ſeems to indicate his ſtone of a harder nature, tho' indeed it felt obtuſe at the end of the catheter.

I ſhall rejoice, if many inſtances of this kind are found afterwards: but this ſeems to be the only one yet, of a ſtone in the bladder being diſſolved by ſoap alone. I am,

Dear Doctor,

Bandeeran, June 5. 1757.

Your moſt humble Servant,

Adam Drummond.